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COMMUNALISM AND THE 1969 GENERAL ELECTIONS - A

STUDY OF POLITICAL MANIFESTOS

by

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## INTRODUCTION

With the attainment of Merdeka, a new struggle began - that of nation-building; the task of integrating the various communities into a Malaysian nation, with a common identity and common aspirations.

Like most multi-racial countries, Malaysia<sup>1</sup> has had its share of racial clashes between the various communal groups; the most serious of which occurred on the May 13, 1969, 3 days after the General Elections. The extent of violence has reached such a proportion as to warrant very serious consideration and action, in the search for an enduring solution to the communal problems.

A study of the problems of communalism would help the understanding of the nature of Malaysian politics, and also the appeals made by the various political parties on the various communities. Communal politicking has its dangers and ordinary issues could often be given communal implications.

This Graduation Exercise does not offer solutions to the problems of communalism; it points some of them out for analysis. Only the two issues which form the main basis of communal disagreement are discussed.

The observations found in this book, particularly pertaining to communal attitudes, are largely the projections of expressed "elite" opinions (some examples are given in the Graduation Exercise). The views expressed in the analysis of the manifestos of the various parties reflect largely the writer's views, based on the study of the manifestos and influenced by the writer's familiarity with the Malaysian political scene.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Also, I must thank those friends who have in one way or another, gave me the encouragement and inspiration to complete this piece of work.

Choong Lai Huat

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<sup>1</sup> For this Graduation Exercise, Malaysia will refer to the Federation of Malaya or West Malaysia.



#### ABBREVIATION

- D.A.P. - Democratic Action Party.  
Gerakan - Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia.  
P.P.P.- People's Progressive Party.  
P.M.I.P. - Pan-Malayan Islamic Party.  
M.C.A. - Malayan Chinese Association.  
UMNO - United Malay National Organisation.



## CHAPTER I

### Definition of Communalism in Malaysia

In seeking to define "Communalism", or to differentiate what is communal from what is not communal, we must not lose sight of objectivity in our approach. Inherent in the definition of communalism is the use of official evidence as basis, and especially in the context of Malaysian social structure, and where the complexity of the communal set-up makes it very difficult "to separate most issues from communalism, because nearly all issues have obvious communal implication" the definition of "communalism" must be made on the basis of accepted and valid principles.

The principle of Focus of Orientation and the principle of Cohesion will be applied, in defining Communalism in Malaysia.

The Focus of Orientation of the people can be divided into four levels:-

- a) Focus of Orientation on Age
- b) Focus of Orientation on Kinship
- c) Focus of Orientation on Community or Communal groups
- d) Focus of Orientation on the Nation (national identity and interests)

The Malaysian society is not culturally homogenous, each community having its own religion, language, customs and social habits. Yet a nation exists, only when the Focus of Orientation of the people is nationalised, that is on national identity and national interests. On the other hand, communalism is said to be existing when the Focus of Orientation of each of the various communities, is community-based; resting firmly on communal identity and communal interests. As long as the people do not give up their communal identity and interests, for a national identity and national interests, communalism is prevalent. If the Chinese look towards the Chinese community for identification,

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R.S. Milner: "Government and Politics in Malaysia" p. 289.

S.J. Ratnam: "Communalism and the Political Process in Malaysia" p. 1



## CHAPTER I

### Definition of Communalism in Malaysia

In seeking to define "Communalism", or to differentiate what is communal from what is not communal, we must not lose sight of objectivity in our approach. Inherent bias may influence the mind to accept superficial evidence as basis for conclusion. And especially in the context of Malaysian social structure, and where the complexity of the communal set-up makes it very difficult "to separate most issues from communalism, because nearly all issues have obvious communal implication"<sup>1</sup> the definition of "communalism" must be made on the basis of accepted and valid principles.

The principle of Focus of Orientation and the principle of Cohesion will be applied, in defining Communalism in Malaysia.

The Focus of Orientation of the people can be divided into four levels:-

- a) Focus of Orientation on Ego
- b) Focus of Orientation on Kinship
- c) Focus of Orientation on Community or Communal groups
- d) Focus of Orientation on the Nation (national identity and interests)

The Malaysian society is not culturally homogenous, "each community having its own religion, language, customs and social habits".<sup>2</sup> But a nation exists, only when the Focus of Orientation of the people is national-based, that is on national identity and national interests. On the other hand, communalism is said to be existing when the Focus of Orientation of each of the various communities, is community-based; resting firmly on communal identity and communal interests. As long as the people do not give up their communal identity and interests, for a national identity and national interests, communalism is prevalent. If the Chinese look towards the Chinese community for identification,

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<sup>1</sup>R.S.Milne: "Government and Politics in Malaysia" p. 229.

<sup>2</sup>K.J. Ratnam: "Communalism and the Political Process in Malaysia" p. 1



and towards Chinese unity to safeguard Chinese interests instead of looking towards national identity and national unity, then communalism predominates over national consciousness. The same applies to the case of the Malay and Indian and other communities. Only when all the communities shift their Focus of Orientation towards the Nation; putting national identity and interests far above their communal identity and interests, can it be said that communalism has given way to nationalism.

The three main levels of the principle of Cohesion are:-

- a) principle of Cohesion based on kinship  
(genetic principle)
- b) principle of Cohesion based on Culture  
(communal principle)
- c) principle of Cohesion based on Territory  
(political principle)

A nation definitely cannot exist if the principle of Cohesion is based upon the cultures of the communities. Since each community in Malaysia has its own culture it would mean that there is no common principle of Cohesion to bind the various communities together as a nation. Therefore a common identity is lacking. The common identity or nationality, which binds the various communities together as a political unit, is derived from the political principle of Cohesion based on Territory. Communalism exists as long as the influence of the principle of Cohesion based on culture predominates over the principle of Cohesion based on Territory. The various communities must discard their culture distinctiveness and communal identification for a national identity based on the principle of Cohesion on Territory; only then can communalism be suppressed, if not eradicated.

In an ethnically plural society, communalism will exist so long as a process of national integration is not undertaken. The process of national integration is defined by Myron Weiner as "the process of bringing together culturally and socially discrete groups into a single territorial unit and the establishment of a common identity"<sup>1</sup>. With national integration successfully implemented, the Focus of Orientation of the people will then be on national level, while the principle of Cohesion shall be on Territory. Otherwise, for as long as the people continue to consider themselves, as Malays, Chinese and Indians, and act accordingly, and not as Malaysians, then there will be communalism. For

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<sup>1</sup>Myron Weiner: "Political Integration and Political Development" in the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, March 1965 p. 55



"though it is not unusual for different sections of a population to have different needs and preferences, in a multi-racial society, communal identification tends to result in certain compartmentalisation of these differences: people acting in groups not only have different preferences, but also different values and different sets of consideration"<sup>1</sup>. A Malaysian nation cannot be built out of these; only communalism will flourish.

The main obstacle to nation-building in Malaysia is the lack of consensus on issues affecting the various communities, especially those relating to language and religion. Any attempt by one community to safeguard its language, for example, will surely bring about reaction from another community. Fear of a cultural expansion by one community over the other often leads to language being specially interested even though original issues may have no communal bearings. A.S. Milne said that "it is impossible to separate most issues from communalism, because nearly all issues have obvious communal implications". However certain indicators can be used to establish the dominance of communalism on the public life in the country.

Take the case of the "New Democracy Fund" set up on the initiative of the Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, to collect donations to aid the Indian Government in its war efforts against China during the Sino-Indian conflict in 1963. It was observed that the bulk of the donations collected came from the Indian community. The support from the Chinese was totally insignificant. It could be inferred from this that the Indians were reacting emotionally to the Fund, not so much as to a "democracy" but more so to "their" cause and of origin their "national patriotism", conspicuously or unconsciously, to India. On the other hand the Chinese may find it difficult to support a fund that will be used to fight their country of origin. Thus was even revealed by the results on this issue, though this division was not absolute. The Fund was initiated on a motion made by the Prime Minister of the country. The fact that the people in their support or non-support of the fund was motivated by communal criteria indicated the lack of room for Organisation of National Unity and predominance of principles of division based on identity. The Fund was given a massive support from the Indians because the Indians were aware that it will benefit India while the Chinese were reluctant to aid India against China, their land of origin.

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<sup>1</sup>K.J. Ratnam: op. cit. p. 210



## CHAPTER II

### INDICATIONS OF COMMUNALISM IN MALAYSIA

The main obstacles to nation-building in Malaysia is the lack of concensus on issues affecting the various communities, especially those relating to language and culture. Any attempt by one community to safeguard its language, for example, will surely bring about reactions from another community. Fear of a cultural suppression by one community over the other often leads to issues being communally interpreted even though originally the issues may have no communal bearings. R.S. Milne says that "it is impossible to sepearate most issues from communalism, because nearly all issues have obvious communal implication"<sup>1</sup>. However certain indicators can be used to establish the domination of communalism on the politics in the country.

Take the case of the "Save Democracy Fund" set up on the initiative of the Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman, to collect donations to aid the Indian Government in its war efforts against China during the Sino-Indian conflict in 1965. It was observed that the bulk of the donations collected came from the Indian community, while the support from the Chinese was totally insignificant. It could be infered from this that the Indians were contributing fanatically to the Fund, not so much as to save "Democracy" but more so to "save" their land of origin, in their "cultural patriotism", consciously or unconsciously, to India. On the other hand the Chineses must have found it difficult to support a fund that will be utilised to fight their country of origin. Thus was seen a division of the people on this ussue, though this division was not made obvious. The fund was initiated on a national basis by the Prime Minister of the country. The fact that the people in their support or non-support of the fund was motivated by communal criteria indicated the lack of focus of Orientation on national identity and predominence of principles of Cohesion based on Culture. The fund was given a massive support from the Indians because the Indians were aware that it will benefit India while the Chinese were reluctant to aid India against China, their land of origin.

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<sup>1</sup>R.S. Milne: "Government and Politics in Malaysia"



In the early 1968, a section of the Malayan Chinese Association started a campaign for a Chinese University, which was later announced to be called Merderka University<sup>1</sup>. The University was intended for the Chinese educated to obtain higher education. The Chinese educated, at that time, had to continue their higher studies abroad, mainly at Universities in Taiwan and the Nanyang University in Singapore. But the Malaysian government has yet to recognise degrees from such universities. The Merkerka University project as expected began to win support from sections of the Chinese community.

The Government and the MCA, while not supporting the Merderka University, came out with a compromise proposal. The MCA proposed to set up a College to be called Tengku Abdul Rahman College which had with the approval of the Government, and the Minister of Education, Inche Khir Johari who announced that the Government will give financial assistance to the setting up of this college on the basis of a dollar to every dollar raised from the public, and will recognise in principle this college's diplomas<sup>2</sup>.

The compromise proposal, which was aimed to subdue Chinese demand, was not acceptable to the proposers of the Merderka University. The President of the Federation of Malaya Chinese School Association and one of the proposers declared that "The MCA should support the Merderka University plan because its proposed college would not be able to absorb the thousands of secondary school leavers. The Chinese have the right to start their own University"<sup>3</sup>.

This statement clearly shows the lack of national orientation and indicated the extent of communal interests. It was clear that the Merkerka University proposal was not in line with the national educational policy at all. The Razak Report 1956 which had as the main objective as establishing "a national system of education acceptable to the people of the Federation as a whole which will satisfy their needs and promote their cultural, social, economic and political development as a nation, having regard to the intention to make Malay the National Language ...."<sup>4</sup>. It was this lack of national consciousness that caused sectors of a community to insist that they have the "right to start their own University", disregarding national aspirations totally.

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<sup>1</sup>Merderka means Independence (in this country). It is obvious that this name was used in order to reduce the reactions of the other communities, especially the Malays.

<sup>2</sup>Straits Times July 15, 1968.

<sup>3</sup>Straits Times July 18, 1968.

<sup>4</sup>Federation of Malaya, Report of the Educational Committee, 1956. p. 1 (often refer to as 'Razak Report').



The Merderka University campaign naturally brought about reactions from the Malays. Objections came from Malay intellectuals, Malay lecturers and students at the University of Malaya and also from the Malay Language Society of the same University. The President in voicing the objection of the Society declared, "The Society cannot compromise with any section of the population who have diverted from the educational policy (of the country). The establishment of the college with multi-language media will raise again the question of language in the country"<sup>1</sup>. Further the Malays went on to demand that the government should set up a National University or University Kebangsaan. Inche Zainal A. Wahid, a Lecturer of the History Department, University of Malaya said to the effect that a national university with Malay as a medium of instruction should be set up first before considering universities with Chinese or other medium of instruction. He justified his call by giving statistics of the number of school-leavers from the Malay-medium schools, which were more than those from Chinese schools.<sup>2</sup> Thus a demand for a Universiti Kebangsaan began to gain strength. This was provoked by the Chinese campaign for the Merderka University, and the Government's approval and support for the MCA College. The whole issue became communal-oriented, and clearly indicated the lack of consensus of the people on the national education policy.

Another indicator of communalism was the campaign for the lives of 11 Chinese youth, condemned to death for consorting with the enemy (Indonesians) during the Confrontation. The campaign was initiated on grounds of mercy, as all the youth were below 21 years of age when they committed the offence. Even the official organ of the ruling party "Alliance" said in an editorial, under the heading "A Cause for Clemency" thus: "We cannot but admit to conflicting reactions to those who await the fatal hour in the death row. Their youth prompts us to pity; their heinous crime only invokes our ire. Still, common humanity dictates that we should comb for every extenuating fact in their favour to justify commuting the sentence passed"<sup>3</sup>. But the campaign for mercy immediately took on a communal undertone as all the 11 youth were Chinese. It was Dr. Tan Chee Khoon, then of the Labour Party (the members of the party are largely non-Malays) who initiated the campaign. Support for clemency came mainly from Chinese and Chinese organisations. The Malays reacted, as expected. They demanded that those who have no loyalty to the country deserve to die. The Malay Language Society of

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<sup>1</sup>Sunday Times: July 21, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Berita Harian: July 26, 1963.

<sup>3</sup>"Alliance"; official organ of the Alliance Party, Vol.111 No. 1, July 1963.



the University of Malaya, in a press release stated explicitly that they supported the death sentence. At a special session of the Speakers' Corner<sup>1</sup> convened to discuss this issue, all the non-Malays speakers came up, one by one to plead for clemency and seek support for the campaign; while Malay students opposed the campaign and made it clear to the effect that these youth deserved to die<sup>2</sup>.

The Democratic Action Party launched a signature campaign, and petitions were circulated in the campus to collect signatures of undergrads. In the petition of signatures obtained from residents of the 2nd and 5th Residential Colleges, all the signatures were from non-Malays. Not a single Malay Student signed the petition.<sup>3</sup>

This clearly indicate the communal influence on the issue. Surely the Malays cannot be said to be less merciful than the Chinese or the Indians. But the issue was considered in a communal perspective. The Malays have often questioned the Chinese's loyalty to the country, and here were 11 Chinese who have committed treason. In the eyes of the Malays such disloyalty must never be encouraged. The question of loyalty overrode the element of clemency.

However when it was made known that there were 2 Malays in Perak under the same death sentence for a similar offence, the opposition from the Malays seemed to lose its vigour. And when the death sentence of the 11 youth was finally commuted to life imprisonment, there was no significant protests from the Malays. The 2 Malays in Perak enjoyed the same pardon.

Another example to show the lack of national consciousness, and therefore the existence of parochial communal identity, involved the Indian community. "Their lack of sense of belonging and lack of identification with this country is shown by the fact of their vigorous cheering for any Indian team that comes down here for athletic or games

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<sup>1</sup>An informal gathering of students, in front of the University Library, for discussions on current affairs.

<sup>2</sup>One Malay student, who was an elected member of the Student Council of the Students' Union, was so emotional that he labelled the 11 youths with numerous vulgar terms.

<sup>3</sup>The writer had the opportunity of looking through the petition and noted this fact.



fixtures".<sup>1</sup> This behaviour could be taken to mean that the Indians appreciate the presence of the foreign teams and seek to give them inspiration, but it could also be interpreted that they still identify themselves culturally to these foreign Indians and that they have not achieved a focus of Orientation based on nation. "The number of occasions observed, and the fact that it is the Malaysian Indians (not so much the other races) who cheer most for the Indian teams instead of the Malaysian teams, points to the latter case. Also one could note the number of Indians who turn out to greet any leader from India".<sup>2</sup>

### 1) The Language and Education Issue

Prior to the achievement of independence, little political importance was attached to the language and education policy, by the various communities. But when independence became apparently inevitable, community leaders and political leaders began to draw their attention and agitation on the question of language in particular and the education policy in general, arousing many communal feelings in the process.

In the process of a cultural education through schools was regarded as important instrument and thus the various communities wished jealously to reserve their "right" to decide the medium of education in which their children should be educated. Majority of the Chinese then, and to a lesser extent the Indians, argued that cultural distinctions should not be limited to political loyalty and conservatism whilst the Malays generally believed that a unified educational system was necessary for the growth of a national consciousness and the building of the nation-state.<sup>3</sup>

The Malays have always considered the importance of language in the national development.

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<sup>1</sup>Tik bin Mustaffa: "Problems of National Integration in Malaysia"; an unpublished Graduation Exercise presented to University of Malaya, p. 25

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



## CHAPTER III

### THE MAIN COMMUNAL ISSUES IN MALAYSIA

The Language and Education issue and the Malay Special Privileges issue are two explosive issues in Malaysian politics; much debated and discussed, often with great communal emotions and acrimony. To understand the communal set-up in the politics of this country, it is relevant that these two issues are discussed historically and in detail, for comparison with the stands of the various political parties, when they are discussed in Section B, under the 1969 General Elections.

#### 1) The Language and Education Issue

Prior to the achievement of Merdeka (Independence), little political importance was attached to the language and education policy, by the various communities. But when Independence became apparently inevitable, community leaders and political leaders began to focus their attention and agitation on the question of language in particular and the education policy in general, arousing much communal feelings in the process.

In the preservation of a culture, education, through schools was considered an important instrument and thus the various communities wished jealously to reserve their "right" to decide the form of education to which their children should be subjected. Majority of the Chinese then, and to a lesser extent the Indians, "argued that cultural distinctiveness was not inimical to political loyalty and cohesiveness<sup>1</sup>, whilst the Malays generally believed that a unified 'Malayan-oriented' educational system was necessary for the growth of a national consciousness and the building of the nation-state".<sup>2</sup>

The Malays have always considered the acceptance of Malay as the National Language by the other communities as a test for their loyalty to this country. This was derived from "the basic philosophy that Malaya was a Malay country, in

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<sup>1</sup>This point of view is currently being put forward by the DAP and shall be discussed in C (Section B).

<sup>2</sup>Margaret Roff: "The Malayan Alliance and its accommodation of communal pressures"; an unpublished treatise;



this Act, lies more than a decade of political activity during which questions on the status of the various languages and their usages frequently arose, and were debated, often with much communal feelings, and provoked conflict within the ruling Alliance Party, and from period to period loomed large enough to threaten seriously the stability and harmony of the country; because "Malay cannot be established as the only official language without seriously affecting the non-Malay communities"<sup>1</sup>.

Though it was generally acceptable that a common language will be required to weld the different communities into a nation; and the logic of choosing Malay for this purpose has scarcely ever been disputed, yet it was the strong desire of the non-Malay communities to preserve their culture and heritage. The fear that in the propagation of the National Language, they may be eventually deculturised gave rise to so much emotions over the question of language and the education system. Further it was felt, and has proved to be so, that active political participation would be monopolised by those "with some education who are able to talk to each other"<sup>2</sup>. In practice, this mean that only the English educated of all races (with few exceptions of Malays) have been able to play a major and direct role in the political scene. So when Malay ultimately become the sole official language, the fear was that political powers will be largely monopolised by the Malays.

But let it not be assumed that the Chinese community alone has demonstrated frustration and disgust regarding language. In a way, each evidence of agitation within the Chinese community has produced a counter-reaction from the Malays. In particular, Malay-medium school teachers, who controlled or exercised tremendous influence over the many rural branches of UMNO, felt dissatisfied when little was done to implement the recommendations of the Razak Report.<sup>3</sup>

The appeal made by the P.P.P. (People's Progressive Party for the recognition of four official languages (Malay, Chinese, Tamil and English) was continued generally to be a feature of the non-Malay opposition parties' demand; while on the other hand the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party (PMIP) a Malay opposition party accused the Alliance Government of what it felt to be the inexcusable gradualism in making Malay the sole official and national language, and the foolish tolerance towards the persistence of the other languages.

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<sup>1</sup>K.J. Ratnam: op. cit. p. 126.

<sup>2</sup>T.H. Silcock: "Towards a Malayan Nation" p. 71.

<sup>3</sup>Razak Report is the popular name for the Educational Committee Report, 1956.



The National Language Bill was finally presented to the House of Parliament; it is remarkable short. Clause 2 states that "The National Language shall be used for official purpose .... save as hereafter provided for in this Act, and subject to the safeguards provided in Clause 1, Article 152 of the Constitution". Clause 3 affirms that "Nothing in this Act shall affect the right of the Federal Government of any State Government to use any translation of official documents or communications in the language of any other community in the Federation for such purposes as may be deemed necessary in the public interests". Clause 4 states explicitly that the "Yang di-Pertuan Agong may permit the continued use of the English language for such official purposes as may be deemed fit".<sup>1</sup>

Clause 3 was seen as an important concession to the MCA and MIC (Malaysian Indian Association) and therefore, to the non-Malays, while Clause 4 ensured the continued importance of the English language.

Opposition of the Act came from two fronts; the non-Malay opposition parties and the Malay opposition party. During the debate on the Bill, in Parliament, the PMIP spokesman, Dato Asri bin Mohammad accused the UMNO of selling out the Malays to the non-Malays and further claimed that the National Language would never have any "economic value". The PPP's leader, the late D.R. Seenivasagam described the Bill as a "Betrayal of 4 million non-Malays" and his view was reiterated by the DAP and the UDP (United Democratic Party) spokesman.

The National Language action front voiced strong dissatisfaction with the Act. However from their various publications it was clear that the NLAFF was less concerned about Chinese and Tamil translation being allowed, then on the continued provision for the widespread use of the English language.<sup>2</sup> As long as English was allowed to be used extensively the development of the National Language will be extremely slow, this being due to the fact that so much social and economic value had been placed on English. Thus the Front claimed that to call Malay the sole official language from 1st September 1967 was just a pretense, and that the Bill, in effect actually sanctioned multi-lingualism.

The Malays maintained that before Merdeka, UMNO had agreed to accept the non-Malays as citizens by relaxing the

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<sup>1</sup>Margaret Roff: op. cit. p135

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



qualifications for citizenship, on the "agreement" that in return for this concession Malay will be accepted unconditionally as the national and sole official language. The Act was seen as the final dishonouring of a bargain.

It could be seen that the language issue cropped up off and on in the political scene and each time, communal emotions which were worked up in the process, have been toned down through the Government's compromises to the various demands; without actually giving the issue an enduring solution. This meant that the issue will come up again in later period, and it came up again prominently in the 1969 General Elections, when political parties tried to win political support on this issue.

## ii) The special position of the Malays

Article 153 of the Constitution provides for the special position of the Malays and the Yang di-Pertuan Agong shall exercise his functions under the Constitution and Federal Law "to ensure the reservation for Malays of such proportion as he may deem reasonable of positions in the public service (other than the public service of a state) and of scholarships, exhibitions and other similar educational or training privileges or special facilities given or accorded by the Federal Government and, when permit or license for the operation of any trade or business is required by Federal Law, then subject to the provisions of that law and this article, of such permits and licenses".<sup>1</sup>

The special position of Malays in the Federal was accorded on the principle that the Malays were the indigeneous people in this country and being "sons of the soil" they should not be overwhelmed by the other communities.<sup>2</sup> Secondly the economic backwardness of the Malays had been the reason advanced for giving the special privileges. The claim was that the Malays, majority of them being in the rural areas, had been left unattended and neglected when the urban areas, populated largely by the Chinese, were developed in pre-independence days. Trade, commerce and industry were assumed to be dominated by the Chinese. On the basis that the Malays could not compete on equal terms, since the Chinese had been so well entrenched in commerce, special assistance were considered necessary.

Special positions and quotas in the Government services were ensured and in the Civil service the ratio of 4 : 1 Malays to non-Malays have been maintained. Similarly

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<sup>1</sup>Federal Constitution, Article 153 (2).

<sup>2</sup>This is the stand of the P.M.I.P.



scholarships and bursaries for educational purposes were given liberally to Malays with the minimum qualifications, to the dissatisfaction of the more qualified non-Malays.

This issue is the one most debated and controversial issue in the Malaysian political process; it is also an explosive issue. Further, the division between 'bumiputra' and 'non-bumiputra' citizens further aggravated the situation. The non-Malays began to think whether they are second rate citizens since the 'bumiputra' enjoyed special privileges.

The Alliance Government maintained that this Clause is only a temporary measure to provide the Malays with a means of entering the economic field which is supposed to be firmly in the grip of the Chinese. The Council of Trust for the Indigeneous People (MARA) - an institution to help the 'bumiputra' is a semi-government body to provide a base whereby the Malay privileges was a right of the Malays in this country or just a temporary privilege extended by the other races to help the Malays was still a controversy. The DAP and PPP challenged the contention that Malays are 'sons of the soil'. Opposition parties further claimed that this 'special privileges' have benefitted the elite Malay, rather than the poor Malays. The Socialistic Party Rakyat does not believe in special privileges but in massive land reforms and Socialistic policies in helping the peasantry and the poor. However to the Malays "these privileges had been a symbol of Malay Rule as well as political eminence. It had even become a norm that the slightest challenge to it could evoke the deepest communal inclinations. It could even be regarded that this protection of the Malay symbolised the security of the positions of the Malays in this country, just like the National Language."<sup>1</sup> Thus any challenge to the legitimacy or even the mere debate on this issue is capable of arousing intense communal feelings, just like in the case on the issue of language and education policy.

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<sup>1</sup>Khong Kim Hoong: op. cit. p 10.



## SECTION B

### Chapter I

#### 1) METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The stands of the political parties on the 2 communal issues; the language and education policy, and the special position of the Malays.

**SECTION B - THE 1969 GENERAL ELECTIONS.**

The intention is to show how communally-orientated (or how nationally-orientated) the various political parties are on the 2 issues. Only the manifesto of the 6 main political parties are content-analysed. They are: Alliance, D.A.P., Gerakan, P.P.R., Partai Rakyat and the P.M.A.P.

#### METHODS

The manifesto of each political party will be taken as an Universe of analysis. In the case of the D.A.P. which issued 2 manifestos: "The Setapak Declaration" and "Our Triple Objective," the former manifesto is chosen for analysis. The justification is that "The Setapak Declaration" is more elaborate and given in better perspective, the objectives and policies of the Party.

With the Universe defined, the next step is to list down the issues for analysis in this sense:-

- a) The language and education policy
- b) The special position of the Malays vis-a-vis the Malays.

With the issues listed the issues to be analysed, the next step is to obtain the frequency of each of the issues, in the whole manifesto of the party. This is done by calculating the extent to which the 2 issues appear in the contents of the whole manifesto. This is because some manifestos are short, with the objectives and policies listed in point-form, while others are longer, and the policies and objectives listed in paragraphs. In the case where the parties list their objectives and policies in point-form, the percentage is easily obtained by dividing the number of points pertaining to each of the 2 issues, over the total number of points in the manifesto, and multiplied by 100.

For example in the case of Gerakan's manifesto:



## SECTION B

### Chapter I

#### 1) METHODOGY OF ANALYSIS

The stands of the political parties on the 2 communal issues; the language and education policy, and the special position of the Malays, are evaluated through the content-analysis of the manifestos of the parties. The intention is to show how communally-orientated (or how nationally-orientated) the various political parties are on the 2 issues. Only the manifestos of the 6 main political parties are content-analysed. They are: Alliance, D.A.P., Gerakan, P.P.P., Partai Rakyat and the P.M.I.P.

#### METHODOGY

The manifesto of each political party will be taken as an Universe of analysis. In the case of the D.A.P. which issued 2 manifesto: "The Setapak Declaration" and "Our Triple Objective," the former manifesto is chosen for analysis. The justification is that "The Setapak Declaration" is more elaborate and gives in better perspective, the objectives and policies of the Party.

With the Universe defined, the next step is to list down the issues for analysis; in this case:-

- a) The language and education policy
- b) The special position of the Malays vis-a-vis the non-Malays.

Having listed the issues to be analysed, the next step is to obtain the frequency of each of the issues, in the whole manifesto of each party. This is done by calculating the extent (in percentage) that these 2 issues appear in the contents of the whole manifesto. This is because some manifestos are short, with the objectives and policies listed in point-form, while other manifesto are longer, and the policies and objectives listed in paragraphs. In the case where the parties list their objectives and policies in point-form, the percentage is easily obtained; by dividing the number of points pertaining to each of the 2 issues, over the total number of points in the manifesto, and multiplied by 100.

For example in the case of Gerakan's manifesto:



Total number of points (objectives) = 30

Number of points pertaining to  
language and education policy = 8

Frequency in percentage =  $\frac{8}{30} \times 100$

= 26.67% (correct to 2 decimal  
places).

In the case where the objectives and policies do not appear in numbered point-form but in paragraph-form, as in the case of the D.A.P.; each paragraph is taken as one point made on the issue. The writer having read through these manifestos is satisfied that in each paragraph, the parties only state one objective (one point) in almost all cases. The same procedure in calculating the frequency percentage is adopted.

Example: DAP's manifesto.

Total number of paragraphs (objectives) = 80

Number of paragraphs pertaining to the  
language and education policy = 9

Frequency in percentage =  $\frac{9}{80} \times 100$

= 11.25%

In calculating the frequency of the issues, the writer has adopted the above method; instead of, for example, measuring the frequency according to the number of sentences pertaining to the issues or the according to occurrence of words pertaining to the issues, because the method adopted is felt to be most suitable. This is because the stands of some parties may be expressed in length; in more words or more sentences, while other parties made their stand short and brief, but as forceful and clear, if not more. Thus to adopt other methods may not be as suitable.

The next step is to give "weights" to the various points or paragraphs made by the various parties, pertaining to their stands on these two issues. A "weight" is defined as a variable which is a function of each point (or paragraph), referring to the intensity in which it is expressed, given arbitrary units. A positive weight in the first issue (that is the language and education policy) implies support for Malay (National Language) as the sole official language (here it is granted that the other languages will not be suppressed as stated in the Constitution). A positive "weight" in the second issue (that is the special position of the Malays) implies support for the Malays "special rights". A negative "weight" in both issues implies opposition to the issues.



Arbitrary "weights" are given to each point (or paragraph) on reading through the manifesto. The "weight" with the greatest intensity, either positive or negative is normalised to an arbitrary extreme of 5, positive or negative as the case may be. The other "weights" are all normalised proportionally. Any normalised weight which is not an integer is re-assigned and made an integer by studying the point (or paragraph) again.

The reason for such re-allocation is that the assignment of "weights" is subjective and to tell its intensity in too many steps, may, while on the one hand extend the selectivity, do much harm to its accuracy on the other. Also because of this point, a discrete variable is chosen for the "weights" because it is difficult to assume that such an assignment (which is relatively subjective) can be accurate enough to yield too many different values of weights, let alone, to give a continuous function.

The weights are normalised to arbitrary extremes of + 5 or - 5 for both issues. The intensity of each point (or paragraph), either positive or negative diminishes from 5 to 1. A neutral stand is given 0 "weight."

Example of assignment of weights on the language and education policy:

Point in P.M.I.P. manifesto: "To strive for a single educational policy, that is, national educational policy in which there will only be one national type of school, with National Language as medium of instruction ....."<sup>1</sup>

Assigned + 5 "weight"

Point in P.P.P. manifesto: "We shall continue our struggle for the recognition of Chinese and Tamil to be recognised as official languages in addition to Malay. In a multi-racial nation like Malaysia where the non-Malay population forms the majority it is manifestly undemocratic and unjust that official status is denied to the languages of the Chinese and Indians who constitute to two other major races in Malaysia."<sup>2</sup>

Assigned - 5 "weight"

Point in Alliance manifesto: "Over the last ten years, enrolment in primary schools has increased by 35% and enrolment in secondary schools by 336%"<sup>3</sup>

Assigned 0 "weight"

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<sup>1</sup>P.M.I.P. manifesto translated into English from Jawi

<sup>2</sup>P.P.P. manifesto: op. cit. p 4

<sup>3</sup>Alliance manifesto: op. cit. p 31



In "weighing" the stands of the political parties, the writer has not picked out phrases used in each point (or paragraph) and then assigning 'weights' to each phrase according to its inclination to the affirmative or negative, because some of the objectives or policies of the parties are expressed in greater length, and as such more phrases are used, while some parties state their objectives or policies in not so many words but equal in strength or intensity. As such 'weights' are given on each point or paragraph according to its intensity in an overall context, as seen in the above examples of assignment of weights. This is felt to be the most suitable method.

The aggregated "weights" of each party obtained on each issue, divided by the percentage frequency of the same issue, gives the Intensity of the stands of the various parties on the particular issue, in the manifesto. The Intensity is a direct measure of the force of the expression of the party on the issue.

The Aggregated Intensity of all political parties on each issue, divided by the number of political parties, gives the Average Intensity of that particular issue. This Average Intensity may be taken to be the stand of a hypothetical neutral party in the Malaysian political environment.

$$\text{Average Intensity (of issue)} = \frac{\text{Intensities of all parties}}{\text{No. of parties}}$$

#### LIMITATIONS:

Some of the manifesto are very complex, and each manifesto differs in format (of presentation of each objective or policy) from the other. As such a single uniform method cannot be adopted, for the manifesto analysed. However the accuracy is maintained as far as possible by adopting the most suitable method in each case. For example in measuring the frequency of the issue in each manifesto, the relative frequency, in percentage is obtained. Only by this could the relative stress given in the manifesto on the issue in question by the various parties, be accurately indicated.

Certain stands made by some parties are lengthy and vague or evasive. Thus in the assignment of "weights" the element of subjectivity may come in. Further the question of subjectivity may arise out of writer's prejudice or bias. However the Assignment of "weights" only reflects the writer's point of view and as such there is no necessity to do the Assignment of 'weights' by statistical method. The writer has tried to maintain the highest level of objectivity in his analysis.

In the case of the P.M.I.P. manifesto which is in Jawi, a translation on the parts pertaining to the 2 issues was made by



a Malay student well-versed in Jawi and English. Though this may not be as exact as the original Jawa script, since much care was taken in the translation, the difference in context, is reduced to the minimum negligible.

## MANIFESTO OF POLITICAL PARTIES

### THE ALLIANCE'S MANIFESTO

#### 1) THE LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION POLICY

In a 48 page manifesto of 139 paragraphs stating its various objectives, the Alliance devoted 18 paragraphs to language and education.

On the question of language, the Alliance claimed that it had "given our nation a common identity by making Malay the sole national and official language, ... and have also kept in pace with overall national policy by strengthening the study of the National language and by making the conditions for this suitable".<sup>1</sup> However the Alliance claimed that "we have and shall continue to maintain the policy of making available the opportunities for the study of other languages and other cultures".<sup>2</sup>

On the education system, the Alliance maintained its educational development programme have been based on "the basic policies that have been adopted by the people of the country as ... and have reached a level the goal of establishing a truly national system of education based on the wishes of parents and acceptable to the nation as a whole".<sup>3</sup>

The Alliance went on to claim that "the common educational syllabus that we introduced into our schools have played a significant role in the achievement of this ideal, and we are confident that whatever the language of instruction may be, all the pupils in our schools have their respective stages of education, well equipped with a stock of knowledge and skills and in the attitude that they should possess".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Alliance Manifesto 1969: "An Even Better Deal for All" p. 38

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 39

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 39



## II

### MANIFESTO OF POLITICAL PARTIES

#### THE ALLIANCE'S MANIFESTO:

##### 1) THE LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION POLICY

In a 48 page manifesto of 139 paragraphs stating its various objectives, the Alliance devoted 18 paragraphs on language and education.

On the question of language, the Alliance claimed that it had "given our nation a common identity by making Malay the sole national and official language, ..... and have also kept in pace with overall national policy by strengthening the study of the National Language and by making the conditions for this suitable"<sup>1</sup> However the Alliance assured that "we have and shall continue to maintain the policy of making available the opportunities for the study of other languages and other cultures"<sup>2</sup>

On the education system, the Alliance maintained its educational development programmes have been based on "the basic policies that have been accepted by the people of the country .. ..... and have reached nearer the goal of establishing a truly national system of education based on the wishes of parents and acceptable to the nation as a whole"<sup>3</sup>

The Alliance went on to claim that "the common content syllabuses that we introduced into our schools have played a significant role in the achievement of this ideal, and we are confident that, whatever the language of instruction may be, all the pupils in our school have their respective stages of education, well equipped with a stock of knowledge and skills and in the attitude that they should possess"<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Alliance Manifesto 1969: "An Even Better Deal for All" p.30

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 29

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 29



vigour"<sup>1</sup> and followed this up with an assurance that "our policies are designed to deprive anyone of opportunities for advancement. Rather our policies are aimed to extend these opportunities to those who have been denied them. We believe that everyone in this country shall have a place in the Malaysian sun"<sup>2</sup> However the Alliance did not spell out clearly what it intended to do for the Malays under Article 153 of the Constitution except to state that "MARA will continue to be one of the main instruments of the Government to assist and promote Malays and other indigenous people in Malaysia to take a more active part in commerce and industry."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Alliance Manifesto: op. cit. p.11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 26.



## THE D.A.P.'s MANIFESTO:

### 1) THE LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION POLICY

In a manifesto of 80 paragraphs, 9 were devoted to language and education. The D.A.P., claiming that "the basic principles of racial equality, mutuality, tolerance and accommodation are clearly absent ..... in the Alliance Government's policies on the sensitive but nonetheless vital questions of language, education and culture"<sup>1</sup> went on to state that "while the D.A.P. will uncompromisely champion the acceptance, propagation and development of the national language, we cannot accept a language and education policy based on the erroneous premise that the propagation and permanence of the national language can only be finally secured on the basis of the eventual deculturation of two major communities in Malaysia - the Chinese and the Indians"<sup>2</sup> It maintained that such a policy was indicated by the National Language Act and the education policy of the Government.

The D.A.P. reiterated its "belief that while the national language should, by virtue of its status, become ultimately the chief language of administration in the country, this should not preclude the use for necessary official purposes, of the Chinese and Tamil languages, in addition to the English language."<sup>3</sup>

The D.A.P.'s argument was that "if linguistic and cultural homogeneity were the vital pre-condition of national existence and consolidation, then several multi-lingual and multi-cultural nations in the world, like Switzerland, Canada or India could never have come into being or succeeded, let alone survived."<sup>4</sup> The D.A.P. maintained that the Constitution recognised the multi-lingual and multi-cultural character of the nation and "guarantees the free use of the languages of the other major communities ....."<sup>5</sup> It argued that this constitutional guarantee was rendered sterile by the Alliance

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<sup>1</sup>D.A.P. Manifesto: "The Setapak Declaration" p.5

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p. 6

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. p. 6

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. p. 6

<sup>5</sup>Ibid



The D.A.P. therefore maintained that the Government's education policy "which does not permit the free use of the Chinese and Tamil languages as media of instruction and of examination in national-type secondary schools. This restriction must lead to the steady deterioration of levels of attainment and of proficiency in these two languages, as well as to the inevitable decline in their usage and to their eventual elimination"<sup>1</sup> and the D.A.P. deemed it as one of its objectives "to secure a correspondence between educational policy and constitutional guarantee"<sup>2</sup>.

#### ii) THE SPECIAL POSITION OF THE MALAYS

13 paragraphs, out of 80 in the D.A.P. manifesto, were devoted to this issue.

The D.A.P. charged the Alliance Government for showing "a readiness to pander to the racialist gallery of a particular community, while ignoring, if not actively offending against, the rights, susceptibilities and aspirations of other communities"<sup>3</sup> by classifying citizens into 'bumiputras' and 'non-bumiputras', discriminating against citizens in matters of appointments and promotions, particularly in the public sector and now increasingly in the private sector, on grounds of race."<sup>4</sup>

While accepting that "the rural peasantry are largely Malays and the bourgeoisie in the towns and the professional classes are largely non-Malays", the D.A.P. charged that communal-minded politicians have been exploiting the situation by playing "on Malay sentiments of insecurity and backwardness in order to justify the political dominance which they exercise in the name of Malays"<sup>5</sup> and conveniently had given "the impression to the Malays that the "haves" are all non-Malays"<sup>6</sup> This, the D.A.P. maintained to be true, for "vast majority of Malaysians of Chinese and Indian origin are workers and wage-earners of various categories"<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>D.A.P. Manifesto: op. cit. p. 6

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. p. 5

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid. p. 7

<sup>6</sup>Ibid. p. 8

<sup>7</sup>Ibid. p. 8



The D.A.P. therefore maintained that the "constitutional provision affording certain special rights to the Malays has been used, not with a view to raising the general standards of living in the rural areas, but for the creation of an elite Malay capitalist class" <sup>1</sup> and charged that "it is impossible to see how the per capita income and the standards of life of the Malay peasantry can be significantly raised by the creation of an elite group of Malay capitalists, who operate in conjunction with an elite group of Chinese compradores and tycoons" <sup>2</sup>

However the D.A.P. was not hesitant to "declare categorically that we welcome the equalisation of opportunities for Malays to participate in all fields of national life" before "it be charged that we oppose Malay participation in business and commercial fields" <sup>3</sup> The D.A.P.'s contention was that "problems of general social and economic development in urban as well as rural areas can only be tackled on the basis of the application of more meaningful economic policies, aimed at improving the lot of the many, and not of enhancing the gains of the few" <sup>4</sup>

The Gerakan also called for the parallel development of the different levels of education in our educational institutions from primary to tertiary levels and for "examinations in the main medium of instruction and to ensure that the results of all examinations are graded in terms of academic achievement" <sup>5</sup>

Lastly, the Gerakan gave its support for both the Buruh and National Unions "in order to preserve the use and study of Malay, Tamil and Chinese up to and including university levels" <sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>D.A.P. Manifesto: op. cit. p. 9

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.



## THE GERAKAN'S MANIFESTO:

### 1) THE LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION POLICY

In a 30 - point manifesto, the Gerakan put forward its stand on this issue in 8 points.

The Gerakan declared that it will "uphold the status and position of our National Language as provided for in our Constitution"<sup>1</sup> and further will "promote the study and rapid development of our National Language in order that it may soon become a more meaningful unifying force within our multi-racial society and to this end to make every endeavour for it to be accepted as a compulsory subject in all educational institutions"<sup>2</sup>

However the Gerakan pressed for "the legitimate use of all languages and a status consistent with the official provisions on the status of all within the National Constitution"<sup>3</sup> because it felt that this was only human and just, at the present stage of development of the Malaysian multi-racial society.

The Gerakan also called for "the parallel development of the different media of instruction in our educational institutions from primary to tertiary levels" and for "examinations in the main medium of instruction and to ensure that the results of all examinations are equated in terms of scholastic achievements"<sup>4</sup>

Lastly, the Gerakan gave its support for both the Merdeka and National Universities "in order to preserve the use and study of Malay, Tamil and Chinese up to and including university levels"<sup>5</sup>

### 11) THE SPECIAL POSITION OF THE MALAYS

The Gerakan, in listing 30 objectives, have only one point pertaining to this issue. The Gerakan declared its intention "to prevent Malay privileges from being abused by unscrupulous leaders"<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia: Election Manifesto, 3rd General Elections 1969.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.



## THE P.P.P.'S MANIFESTO:

### 1) THE LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION POLICY

In a 70 - point manifesto, the P.P.P. listed 7 points pertaining to its language and education policy.

The P.P.P. rejected the Alliance Government's education policy as totally unacceptable because "a Malay outlook rather than a Malaysian outlook determines the policy which has caused resentment and disgust throughout the country" <sup>1</sup>

The P.P.P. demanded for an Independent Committee, which is to be composed of "educationalists drawn from various communities and who are without political or racial bias or favour" to be set up to formulate an education policy "suitable and acceptable to the needs and aspirations of the people of this country" <sup>2</sup>

The education policy demanded by the P.P.P. must provide for "medium of instruction and examination to be in accordance with the wishes of the parents - Malays, Chinese, Tamil or English" with "fair and equal treatment for all educational institutions irrespective of race" and that "all students after completion of their studies shall be treated equally in the matter of selection for jobs, irrespective of whichever school or college they are educated in" <sup>3</sup>

The P.P.P.'s stand on the National Language was made explicitly clear; it shall fight for "the recognition of Chinese and Tamil to be recognised as official languages in addition to Malay" because the P.P.P. felt that "in a multi-racial nation like Malaysia where the non-Malay population forms the majority it is manifestly undemocratic and unjust that official status is denied to the languages of the Chinese and Indians who constitute

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<sup>1</sup> P.P.P.'s Manifesto 1969: "Malaysia for Malaysian"  
p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 4



the two other major races in Malaysia."<sup>1</sup>

ii) THE SPECIAL POSITION OF THE MALAYS

The P.P.P. devoted 10 points of its total 70 points in the manifesto, on the special position of the Malays vis-a-vis the non-Malays.

It maintained that in a united Malaysian Malaysia<sup>2</sup> every citizen shall be equal and that no "section of its citizen is made to feel that it is inferior or superior to any other section"<sup>3</sup>

The P.P.P. then claimed that "the Special rights' clause in the Constitution has been grossly abused by the UMNO dominated Alliance Government to the detriment of the non-Malays citizens of this nation" and further charged that "it is becoming more and more evident that the Alliance intends to preserve this obnoxious provision as a permanent feature of the Constitution"<sup>4</sup>

The P.P.P. maintained that the "Special rights and privileges have brought no material or other benefits to the Malay Ra'ayat who after 10 years of independence find themselves in the same social and economic plight they were in before Merdeka"<sup>5</sup> It accused the Alliance of abusing its powers and "under the guise of enforcing the special rights, has created a Malay capitalist class which is now exploiting the Malay masses."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>P.P.P. Manifesto: op. cit. p.4

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p.3. The P.P.P. accepted in its manifesto the Malaysian Solidarity Convention's (of Opposition Parties, and initiated by Lee Kuan Yew's People Action Party, when Singapore was in Malaysia) definition: "A Malaysian Malaysia means that the nation and the State is not identified with the Supremacy, well-being and the interests of any particular community or race". It further pointed out that a Malaysian Malaysia is the anti-thesis of a Malay Malaysia.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. p.3

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. p.3

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.



The P.P.P. concluded that while not bringing any benefits to the Malay Ra'ayat, this policy "has served as a constant irritant to non-Malays disrupting the unity of the people and perpetuating racial prejudices" and thus "it will be the determined object of the P.P.P. to continue to strive to have the Constitution amended to abolish priveleges granted to any particular race".<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>P.P.P. Manifesto: op. cit. p. 3.



## THE PARTAI RAKYAT'S MANIFESTO:

### i) THE LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION POLICY

In a manifesto of 45 paragraphs, the Partai Rakyat devoted 6 paragraphs to this issue. In a comparatively non-communal stand on the language and education policy, the Partai Rakyat called for reforms more socialist in outlook, than towards sectional communal interests.

Besides the call for abolition of school fees and other socialistic educational reforms, the Partai Rakyat called for the provisions of "equal opportunities for education - irrespective of social and economic background - through an education system with Malay as the main medium, use Malay as a medium for as many subjects as possible, abolish the teaching of English as a subject at primary level, encourage the learning of languages of the people, provide other international and scientific languages like French, Russian, German and Chinese as subjects at secondary level."<sup>1</sup>

The Partai Rakyat pointed out that "Imperialist culture disseminated through yellow books, magazines and films are allowed to flow in freely to warp the minds of the people and destroy the morals of youths, whereas the cultures of the various national groups in the form of their languages, literature, dances and music survive under serious suppression" and therefore it called for the restriction of "the entry of yellow culture through phonographic magazines, books and films" and to encourage and aid 'literary and cultural organisations in order to produce new and popular creations of high standards."<sup>2</sup>

### ii) THE SPECIAL POSITION OF THE MALAYS

As Partai Rakyat is an ideological party and it had categorically stated that "exploitation recognises neither race nor creed"<sup>3</sup>, there was no mention at all on the question of the special position of the Malays. Its approach in economic reforms was purely non-communal.

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<sup>1</sup>Manifesto of Partai Rakyat, 1969: "Unite Under the Banner of Socialism of Partai Rakyat"

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



## THE P.M.I.P.'S MANIFESTO:

### i) THE LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION POLICY

The P.M.I.P.'s stand on the issue was both religious and sectional in approach. In a manifesto of 65 paragraphs, only 4 were devoted to language and education.

The P.M.I.P. declared that it will strive for a single educational policy, that is, national educational policy, in which there will only be one national type of school, with National Language as medium of instruction, from the lowest to the highest standard.<sup>1</sup>

It further advocated that the teaching of Islam as a compulsory subject at all levels of education, from primary to university level, and maintained that Education should be based on Islamic principles.<sup>2</sup>

The P.M.I.P. also called for compulsory schooling for all those who have attained the schooling age and that free education be provided for, at all levels.<sup>3</sup>

### ii) THE SPECIAL POSITION OF THE MALAYS

The P.M.I.P.'s stand on this, was very straight forward and brief. Out of 65 paragraphs only 3 were concerned with the special position of the Malays. This may be due to the fact that P.M.I.P. took for granted the Malays "Special rights" since the P.M.I.P. had also maintained that Malaya was a Malay country.<sup>3</sup>

The P.M.I.P. maintained that to give the non-Malays political power, in addition to what they already possessed, would be betraying the Malay race. It also claimed that in the near future, the Malays will be in the minority, and through the democratic process, the Malays will be the subservient group. The P.M.I.P. declared that it will fight for the continue existence of the rights and sovereignty of the Malays, as the bumiputras of this country.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>P.M.I.P. Manifesto 1969, translated from Jawi script, into English.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>K.J.Ratnam: op.cit. p. 165

<sup>5</sup>P.M.I.P. Manifesto. op. cit.



Total number of paragraphs (points) in the DAP Manifesto is 80.

### III

#### CONTENT ANALYSIS OF MANIFESTO

##### 1) ALLIANCE:

The total number of numbered paragraphs (points) in the Alliance Manifesto is 139.

| ISSUE                          | RAW<br>FREQUENCY | WEIGHTS   |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---|
| Language and Education Policy  | 18               | +1, +1, -1, 0, 0, +5, 0, 0, 0, 0, +1, 0, +1, 0, 0, 0, 0, +4, +3 |
| Special position of the Malays | 7                | +3, +5, +4, +2, +1, +4, +5                                      |

| ISSUE                          | PERCENTAGE<br>FREQUENCY | Σ WEIGHTS | INTENSITY |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Language and Education Policy  | 12.95                   | +13       | +1.001    |
| Special Position of the Malays | 5.04                    | +24       | +4.762    |



| ISSUE                             | PERCENTAGE<br>FREQUENCY | Σ WEIGHTS | INTENSITY |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Language and<br>Education Policy  | 26.67                   | +3        | +0.1125   |
| Special Position<br>of the Malays | 3.34                    | +2        | +0.5988   |

iv) P.P.P.

Total number of points (objectives) in P.P.P.  
Manifesto is 70.

| ISSUE                                | RAW<br>FREQUENCY | WEIGHTS                                   |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|---|
| Language<br>and Education<br>Policy  | 7                | 0, 0, 0, 0, -3, -4, -5                    |
| Special<br>Position of<br>the Malays | 10               | -1, -4, -2, -2, -3, -5, -1,<br>-1, -2, -2 |

| ISSUE                             | PERCENTAGE<br>FREQUENCY | Σ WEIGHTS | INTENSITY |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Language and<br>Education Policy  | 10                      | -12       | -1.200    |
| Special Position<br>of the Malays | 14.29                   | -23       | -1.61     |



v) THE PARTAI RAKYAT

The total number of paragraphs in the Manifesto is 45.

| ISSUE                          | RAW<br>FREQUENCY | WEIGHTS            |
|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Language and Education Policy  | 6                | +1, 0, 0, 0, +4, 0 |
| Special Position of the Malays | 0                | -                  |

| ISSUE                          | PERCENTAGE<br>FREQUENCY | $\Sigma$ WEIGHTS | INTENSITY |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------|
| Language and Education Policy  | 13.34                   | +5               | +0.375    |
| Special Position of the Malays | 0                       | 0                | 0         |

vi) THE P.M.I.P.

Total number of paragraphs in Manifesto is 65

| ISSUE                          | RAW<br>FREQUENCY | WEIGHTS     |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Language and Education Policy  | 4                | +5, 0, 0, 0 |
| Special Position of the Malays | 3                | +2, +3, +5  |



| ISSUE                             | PERCENTAGE<br>FREQUENCY | Σ WEIGHTS | INTENSITY |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Language and<br>Education Policy  | 6.15                    | +5        | +0.813    |
| Special Position<br>of the Malays | 4.62                    | +10       | +2.1645   |

It can be seen how wide the area of disagreement over these 2 main issues are, between the various political parties. If 0 (arbitrary units) intensity is taken to be the point of neutrality, then it can be seen that on both issues, the Alliance is on the affirmative extreme while the DAP and P.P.P. are on the negative extreme. The PMIP shows a relatively lower intensity on both issues, than the Alliance because it devoted much of its Manifesto to the propagation of Islam in its educational policy. In the case of Malay Special Position, there was little mention of it because the PMIP assumes Malaysia to be a Malay country and there is no question of Special Position of the 'bumiputras'. In the case of Partai Rakyat, being a socialist party, it is more concerned with massive social and economic reforms, than of special assistance being given to sections of the people. To the Party, poverty and exploitation know no race, as such its policy is aimed at advancement of the lower class of all races. Thus no mention of Malay Special Position in its Manifesto. In the case of the Gerakan, it is another "middle-road" party.

Further if it can be inferred from Section A, on the discussion of the two issues that the parties at the two extreme ends, in their stands are pandering to the communal demands of the various communities, then it can be seen that communalism is an important factor in bringing about a wide area of disagreement between the political parties on 2 important issues which are endorsed in the Constitution of the country<sup>1</sup>. This will be inimical to the process of political development, and nation-building.

If it can be assumed that the politics in the country can work on a basis of compromise. And that the various parties in making their stands on the 2 issues are responsible and

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<sup>1</sup>Federal Constitution: Article 152 and Article 153



sincere in their demands which merely reflect the wishes of the communities which they may represent. Then the compromise of all communities on the 2 issues, can be assumed to be at the point of Average Intensity, where

$$\text{Average Intensity (of an issue)} = \frac{\sum \text{Intensity of all parties}}{\text{No. of parties}}$$

(In this, we assume that the extreme stands of the various parties are compromised and we arrived at a position that may be accepted to all)

In our case, we obtain the following results:

- i) Average Intensity on Language and Education policy = -0.3537
- ii) Average Intensity on Malay Special Position = +1.0969

In the Malaysian political context, the 2 Average Intensity on the 2 main issues above will be the compromised positions. But it can be seen that the difference between the demands of the extreme parties are too far apart from the compromise position. The area of disagreement on these 2 issues are too wide between the extreme parties as to allow for compromises as workable and enduring solutions, in long-term political development.



## IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE MANIFESTO

In this chapter the stands made by the six political parties on the two communal issues; the language and education policy and the special position of the Malays, as evaluated in the parties' manifesto are compared and analysed.

It must be pointed out that if the stand of the ruling party, that is, the Alliance is more critically analysed, than those of the other parties, it does not in any way reflect any bias on the part of the writer, against the Alliance party. The unequal proportion in the analysis may be attributed to the fact that the Alliance party, being the Government and in the position to make policies; and in the comparison of its policies with its stated objectives in the manifesto, gives more scope for analysis. The writer, in this analysis, strives to maintain the highest level of objectivity, in the interpretation of the manifesto.

#### 1) THE LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION POLICY

On the National Language, the Alliance claims that it has "given our nation a common identity by making Malay the sole national and official language".<sup>1</sup> It must be pointed out that a common identity is not obtainable by the mere proclamation of "Malay as the sole national and official language". What about the implementation of the policy? The crucial point is whether the implementation of the policy has really reached the stage where a common identity has been achieved. The Alliance mentions that it has strengthened the study of the National Language by making conditions for this suitable; but it does not mention any specific instances or examples of such "conditions" and the voters may be tempted to ask, what were the conditions created since 1957? In fact, the P.M.I.P. would charged the Alliance for doing otherwise, as can be seen in the P.M.I.P.'s objection to the National Language Act, 1967.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Alliance Manifesto: op. cit. p. 30

<sup>2</sup>P.M.I.P. objection was voiced by Dato Asri bin Mohammad, leaver of P.M.I.P. on debate in Parliament on the Act. He claimed that the National Language was not given any 'economic value' and thus English will continue to be the most important language.



From its manifesto, it can be inferred that the DAP does not accept that Malay should be the sole official language, as it called for the use of the other languages for "necessary official purposes". This is very contrary to the provision of the National Language Act, 1967 passed by Parliament.<sup>1</sup> The DAP further does not accept the Alliance's argument that a common language will aid the integration of the various communities, acting as a unifying factor, and the DAP cites the case of Switzerland, and Canada. The DAP goes on to maintain that the multi-lingual character of the country is recognised by the Constitution which guarantees the free use of the languages of the other major communities. Though it is true that the Constitution guarantees the free use of the other languages in so far as these languages will not be suppressed; but the Constitution does not provide for these languages to be used for "necessary official purposes". This is very clearly stated in Article 152 (1) a that "no person shall be prohibited or prevented from using (otherwise than for official purposes) or from teaching or learning, any other language."<sup>2</sup> Thus it must be assumed that either the DAP has misinterpreted the Constitution, which is unlikely since it is stated explicitly that other languages can be used "otherwise than for official purpose" or that the DAP is trying to mislead the voters. The DAP maintains that the Alliance's education policy which does not permit the free use of the Chinese and Tamil languages as media of instruction and of examination in national-type secondary schools, has rendered null and void the constitutional guarantee with regard to the free use of the other languages in the country and this restriction must lead to the steady deterioration of level of attainment and of proficiency in these two languages and to their inevitable decline and eventual elimination. But this does not necessary be so. Perhaps it is legitimate for the DAP to ask for these languages to be made compulsory second languages and thus ensure that there will be no decline in usage. It must be pointed out that if the National Language (that is, Malay) is to "become ultimately the chief language of administration"<sup>3</sup> as accepted by the DAP, then it is logical to expect that the education policy should ensure that the people must master the language, and thus the National Language should be made the main medium of instruction. Otherwise what is the purpose of having a National Language? The DAP's argument rests on the interpretation of the phrase "free use" which includes usage for "necessary official purposes" and as

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<sup>1</sup>The National Language Act 1967 made Malay the sole official language.

<sup>2</sup>Federal Constitution: Article 152 Clause 1 (a).

<sup>3</sup>D.A.P. Manifesto: op. cit. p6.



media of instruction and of examination. It is ironical that while the DAP will "uncompromisingly champion the acceptance, propagation and development of the National Language"<sup>1</sup> it should demand for the official status of the other languages, (demand for usage for official purposes will automatically mean recognition of official status) and for these languages to be media of instruction and of examination. A National Language must not merely exist in name or on paper; a National Language must ultimately be the medium of conversation and communication between the peoples of the country, otherwise it is not a 'national' at all.

The Gerakan fully accepts the National Language, and will uphold its status and position as provided in the Constitution. The Gerakan, accepting the National Language as the unifying force seeks to promote its study and rapid development; but its approach is different. It does not advocate the National Language as the only medium of instruction, but as a compulsory subject in all educational institutions, while other languages may remain media of instruction and of examination. This is because the Gerakan pressed for the legitimate use of all languages and a status as provided for in the Constitution. Interpreting Article 152 of the Constitution, the status the Gerakan demanded does not amount to 'official status' as demanded by the DAP and P.P.P. However the question is on the interpretation of "legitimate use". It is not stated explicitly that the National Language will be the only medium of instruction in the Constitution, and as such the Gerakan's call for the parallel development of the different media of instruction and for examinations in the main medium of instruction and to ensure that the results of all examinations are equated in terms of scholastic achievement, is not contrary to the provisions of the Constitution. However it is contrary to the recommendation of the Razak Report<sup>2</sup> that "children of all races should come under a national educational system in which the National Language (Malay) is the main medium of instruction"<sup>3</sup>. The call for the results of all examinations to be equated in terms of scholastic achievement is interpreted as giving recognition to the other languages in terms of employment opportunities and other languages in terms of employment opportunities and entries into Government services and the like. In other

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<sup>1</sup>DAP Manifesto. op. cit. p5.

<sup>2</sup>The Razak Report which is the popular name for the Federation of Malaya, Report of the Educational Committee, 1956.

<sup>3</sup>Federation of Malaya, Report of the Educational Committee, 1956, p. 3.



words equal "economic value" for all languages. But this amounts, indirectly to giving them 'official' status and again may delay, if not hinder, the development of the National Language.

The P.P.P.'s stand on the language issue is very clear; it shall fight for the recognition of the Schinese and Tamil languages. The P.P.P. is openly communal; it speaks in terms of the 'strength' of the communities, not in terms of national interests. Since the non-Malays form the majority it is "manifestly undemocratic and unjust" not to accord official status to the languages of the two major communities, the Chinese and the Indians.

The Partai Rakyat's stand on the question of language is non-communal. While it calls for an education system with Malay as the main medium, it recognises the other "languages of the peoples" and calls for the encouragement in learning them. The Partai Rakyat's stand appears to be that the other "languages of the people", that is, Chinese and Tamil have a more rightful place in this country than English (which is not a 'language of the people' here) and thus it calls for the abolition of the teaching of English at primary level. The abolition of English at primary level will ensure that Malay will assume its importance as the National Language and main medium of instruction, since at the present moment English is placed at a very important position still. The Partai Rakyat, being practical, calls for the use of Malay as medium for as many subjects as possible, realising that the present stage of development of the language does not allow for an irrational (but communally appealing) call for an immediate shift to Malay as main medium of instruction.

The P.M.I.P.'s stand on the issue of language and education is that there should be a single national educational policy in which there will only be one medium of instruction - the National Language. It gives no provisions at all for the other languages. Here the P.M.I.P. is strictly sectional in its approach, and not realistic at all. It expects the other languages to be discarded totally (since it makes no provisions) and this is not possible within a short time.

On the education policy as a whole, the Alliance claims that it has reached nearer the goal of establishing a truly national system of education, based on the wishes of parents and acceptable to the nation as a whole. This is misleading, as it is clear that a "truly national system" of education ideal to the national as a whole may not be acceptable to the parents (of all communities), and vice-versa. What the Alliance is striking at is a compromise; to please the people as a whole while not neglecting national interests. But is this possible? The Alliance claims that the common



syllabuses that it has introduced in the schools have played a significant role in the achievement of the "truly national system" of education, and whatever the language of instruction may be, all the pupils will have their respective stages of education, well equipped with a stock of knowledge and skills and in the attitude that they should possess. The Alliance seems to be confused there. What is its version of a 'truly national system of education' - a system of education, with common content syllabuses and whatever the language of instruction may be? And if this is so, what is Malay as the sole national and official language for? Moreover what about the recommendation of the Report of the Educational Committee 1956; under the chairmanship of Tun Abdul Razak, now Deputy Prime Minister - that "children of all races should come under a national educational system in which the National Language (Malay) is the main medium of instruction"<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore if the achievement of the national system of education can be achieved as stated by the Alliance, with any language of instruction, then the other communities are justified to demand that Chinese and Tamil remain media of instruction in schools. Thus the Alliance's stand on the language and education policy as a whole is very vague and at times, misleading.

With regards to University education, the Alliance seems to be well satisfied with physical achievements; the establishment of the University and the large enrolment of 7,000. There is no mention of standards achieved vis-a-vis international standards, for example; or whether employment opportunities will be available to 7,000 graduates, when they complete their courses. It is really no use in producing graduates if they cannot be absorbed into employment for it leads to the creation of a "floating population" of unemployed graduates. And this will be unconducive to the political and economic stability of the country. Furthermore have the plans for Penang University and National University been subjected to careful study? Establishing a University is easy, but what about the academic staff; are they available; and what are the courses of studies to be made available, will they be geared towards national goals. These are important aspects of development planning. The Alliance seems to forget the importance of development planning, in its haste to concede to public demand for more universities.

The Alliance further promised that it "shall increase the educational facilities in the country up to the limit of the desires of the people"<sup>2</sup>. This is vague as well

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<sup>1</sup>Report of Education Committee 1956: op. cit. p. 3

<sup>2</sup>Alliance Manifesto: op. cit. p. 32



as sweeping. It could be interpreted that if the Chinese desire Chinese schools; Indians, Indian schools and likewise Malays want Malay schools, will the Alliance government comply to such "desires" and up to the limit. What about the "truly national system" of education and the common identity the Alliance mentions in the earlier parts of its manifesto.

The DAP focuses more particularly on the language issue than on the education policy as a whole. In general, the education policy that the DAP envisages, is based on the propagation and development of the National Language without any deculturation of the Chinese and Indians. Here the DAP expects the propagation of a common national identity while the two communities, the Chinese and Indians preserve their cultural distinctiveness. This will be impossible.

The Gerakan's stand on the education policy includes supporting both the Merdeka and National Universities. Here the Gerakan states clearly its reason for supporting these 2 universities; "in order to preserve the use and study of Malay, Tamil and Chinese up to and including University level"<sup>1</sup>. Though this is in line with Gerakan's policy for "parallel development" of all languages, the question is will this be inimical to national-building and national integration.

The P.P.P. rejects the Alliance government's education policy outright saying that it has a Malay outlook. This is crudely communal, since no reasons are put forward by the P.P.P. Moreover the acceptance of Malay as National Language has been endorsed in the Constitution and further more the implementation of the National Language has never been carried out to the extent considered as satisfactorily to the more extremist of the Malay community. Up to 1967, little was done by the Alliance to implement the National Language.

The P.P.P. may have a reason to ask for an Independent Committee to formulate the education policy, but its approach is again communal. For the P.P.P., educationalists are only qualified to formulate the education policy, if they are without political or racial bias or favour; and these educationalists must represent the various communities. The education policy of the P.P.P. provides for the other languages to be used as media of instruction and of examinations and the recognition of the "economic" value of the other languages. This demand seems to reflect the demand of the non-Malay opposition parties, as both DAP and Gerakan make similar demands.

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<sup>1</sup> Gerakan M. Manifesto 1969



The Partai Rakyat demonstrates its non-communal base by calling for the learning of international and scientific languages at secondary level, recognising their usefulness and values in the economic and social development of the country. Here is shown the national - orientation of the Partai Rakyat on this issue, unlike the other parties which often, in smaller or bigger ways, sacrifice objectivity and national interests for the sake of winning support from the various communities.

The P.M.I.P. educational policy is religious in outlook as it calls for Islam to be made a compulsory subject at all levels of education. The propagation of the Malay religion, Islam, is seen as the main objective of the P.M.I.P.'s educational policy and in the eyes of the non-Malays will be viewed as a policy of assimilation of the other communities.

While it may be true that the Alliance policy on language and education is not of the extreme communal nature as some of the Opposition parties are, but the Alliance is far from being non-communal. It works on the compromise to the demands of the various communities; and in doing so, it is actually compromising national interests for communal interests. The Alliance has to a large extent, sacrificed national interests, when it concedes to communal demands on the issue of language and education policy, and this necessarily mean slowing down the process of national integration and nation-building.

The DAP's approach on the language and education policy, shows clearly the extreme communal nature of the Party. Its demands are contrary to the Constitutional provisions and they indicate a total neglect for national interests and national aspirations.

The Gerakan is the most rational of all the Opposition (except the ideological Partai Rakyat). Its approach is reasonably less communal, though like the Alliance, its faults lie in the fact that it has a tendency to accommodate sectional demands. And this can only be done by putting national interests on a lower priority that it should be.

The P.P.P. without any doubt is an open communal party and its demands are crudely communalistic in outlook. Its demands are all based on the strength of the Malays - non-Malays continuum.

The Partai Rakyat is an ideological party, and its stand on the issue is non-communal but socialistic and nationalistic in approach. Though it calls for an education system with Malay as main medium, it recognises the "languages of the people" and the usefulness of international and scientific languages. It is the only party which is



concerned about the 'yellow' culture which it claims is destroying the morals of the youth in the country.

The P.M.I.P. is the other extreme communal party, the Malay communal party, and its demands are based on the philosophy that Malaya is a Malay country<sup>1</sup> and as such it gives no provisions for the languages of the other communities.

#### 11) THE SPECIAL POSITION OF THE MALAYS.

The Alliance's stand on this issue is also very evasive. Its policy of "levelling up the position of the have-nots .... to the economic status of the 'haves'"<sup>2</sup> implies that only Malays are the "have-nots" and the "haves" are all non-Malays. This is where the question of racial discrimination is introduced by some opposition parties. The DAP argued that there are Chinese and Indian "have-nots" besides Malay "have-nots"<sup>3</sup>. If the Alliance's policy is to help all "have-nots", why only to the Malays? What about the "have-nots" of the other communities. This is the racial discrimination that the DAP and P.P.P. talk about, and which makes sense to the voters. The Alliance's manifesto is vague on the Malay's special position. The Party does not spell out specifically what it intend to do for the Malays under Article 153 of the Constitution, except to mention the role of MARA.

The DAP shows a similar communal inclination in its stand on this issue. The emphasis of the DAP's criticism is that the "special rights" of the Malays have been abused by the Alliance for the benefits of an elite class of Malays and that instead of helping the poor Malays, rich Malays are benefitting from these privileges. But while the DAP welcomes the "equalisation of opportunities for Malays in all fields of national life"<sup>4</sup>, yet the DAP charges the Alliance with discrimination in matters of appointments in public and private sectors, on ground of race. This may be a step towards equalisation of opportunities "in all fields of national life", unless the DAP proves otherwise. The DAP's stand on this issue is communal.

The Gerakan's stand on this issue is brief and short. It seeks only to prevent the abuse of the Malay privileges by unscrupulous leaders. Implicit in this, is the Gerakan recognition of the Malay's privileges. What it

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<sup>1</sup>K.J. Ratnam: op. cit. p. 165

<sup>2</sup>Alliance Manifesto 1969: op. cit. p.11

<sup>3</sup>DAP Manifesto: op. cit. p.8

<sup>4</sup>DAP Manifesto: op. cit. p.9



seeks, is merely to prevent it from being abused in the process of implementation. Unlike the DAP and P.P.P., the Gerakan avoids the issue of racial discrimination and the division of "bumiputra and non-bumiputras". The Gerakan is non-communal on this issue.

The P.P.P. is outright communal on the special position of the Malays. It charges the Alliance with the intention of preserving the "special privileges" provision as a permanent feature of the Constitution without substantiating further. There is definitely a vast difference between prolonging the provision (which may be the case) as compared to making the provision permanent as charged by the P.P.P. The P.P.P. maintains further that these "special privileges" have brought no material or other benefits to the Malay Ra'ayat. While it may be true that a "Malay capitalist class" may have been created under the guise of enforcing these rights, it will be equally untrue to say that no Malay Ra'ayat has benefitted from these privileges. The P.P.P. is the only opposition party which states clearly that it works towards the abolition of these privileges, without suggesting the alternatives as to how to provide "material and other benefits to the Malay Ra'ayat in their social and economic plight".<sup>1</sup>

Since the Partai Rakyat categorically states that exploitation recognises neither race nor creed, it therefore works for the advancement of the "have-nots" of all races. It has no mention at all on the special position of the Malays. Here again it is non-communal but ideological in approach.

The P.M.I.P.'s stand on the Malay "special privileges" is based on the Party's philosophy that Malaya belongs to the Malays. As such there is no question of giving these "special privileges" - it is only a matter of safeguarding them; "fight for the continued existence of the rights and sovereignty of the Malays as the bumiputras of this country".<sup>2</sup> The P.M.I.P. is strictly communal and has no accommodation for the non-Malays on this issue.

The analysis of the stands of the various parties on the 2 issue has distinguished them into various categories of political parties; the extreme 'non-Malay' communal parties as indicated by DAP and P.P.P.; the extreme 'Malay' communal party like P.M.I.P.; the "middle-of-the road" parties like the Alliance and Gerakan and the ideological party, Partai Rakyat.

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<sup>1</sup>P.P.P. Manifesto: op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>P.M.I.P. Manifesto: translated in English from



## CHAPTER II

### THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS

Three days after the election, communal clashes broke out in Kuala Lumpur and other parts of Selangor, and later spread to scattered regions in other States. A state of Emergency was proclaimed, and all efforts were diverted towards restoration of law and order, and the spreading of goodwill. The heat of the election campaign was inevitably "cooled" off by this outbreak of violence; but time was not given for a realistic assessment to be made of the reasons and effects of the electorate's verdict. This chapter will give a survey of the elections' results and attempts to indicate the pattern of voting.

The Alliance was returned to power, but it suffered an election set-back it had never encountered before. In West Malaysia, out of 103 Parliamentary seats decided, (one more seat to be decided later, due to the death of a candidate) the Alliance won only 66 seats, including 9 seats which were returned unopposed on Nomination day; as compared to the 89 seats it won in the 1964 General Elections. The combined Opposition in West Malaysia alone, had obtained 37 seats, compared with 15 seats in 1964.

"The loss of 22 seats in West Malaysia and a less than 50% share of the total valid votes"<sup>1</sup> was worse than the most pessimistic of Alliance calculations before the elections. An unofficial count showed that the Alliance obtained a total of 1,018,656 votes, which was 49.1% of the total valid votes casted; a drop of 9.4% when compared to the 58.5% it obtained in 1964. The combined Opposition votes was 1,053,759 with the P.M.I.P. winning 24.3% of the total valid votes; D.A.P., Gerakan and P.P.P. getting 12.5%, 8.4% and 4% respectively.<sup>2</sup> But the Alliance lost more! Three Ministers, Inche Senu bin Abdul Rahman, Minister of Information and Broadcasting; Dr. Lim Swee Aun, Minister of Commerce and Industry; Dr. Ng Kam Poh, Minister of Welfare Services, were defeated. Control of the Penang State Government was lost to the Gerakan. In Penang the Alliance won only 4 seats out of 24 seats, compared with the 19 seats it won in 1964. In Perak it won only 19 seats out of the total 40, two short of a majority. In Selangor,

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<sup>1</sup> Straits Times Editorial, 12th May, 1969.

<sup>2</sup> Figures obtained from Straits Times, 12th May, 1969.



there was a stalemate with the Alliance controlling 14 seats of the 28 seats - the Opposition and Independent, the other 14 seats. The Alliance made very little headway in Kelantan, despite its special efforts there and a promise of \$548 million for the development of that State if the Alliance win control. It nearly lost control of Trengganu, winning only 13 seats, with the P.M.I.P. taking the other 11 seats.

The P.M.I.P. had increased its votes by well over 50% as compared to 1964, to nearly half a million. It polled 24.3% of the total votes, as compared to 14.5% in 1964 - a rise of 9.8%. Its strength had been gained, mainly in the predominantly Malay States of Kelantan, Perlis, Kedah and Trengganu.<sup>1</sup>

The D.A.P. and Gerakan polled 286,607 (12.5% of total votes) and 178,971 (8.4%) votes respectively. Together, their votes were nearly 100,000 more than the combined votes of the Socialist Front and the People's Action Party in the 1964 General Elections. Their popularity was concentrated in Penang, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Johore - all predominately non-Malay. In Johore, although only the D.A.P. won one state seat, the D.A.P. and the Gerakan together polled one-third of the Alliance votes.

A prominent feature of the election was that the Alliance had been assaulted on both flanks. How far was it due to the rejection of the Alliance middle-of-road policies, in favour of the extreme communal policies of the D.A.P. and P.P.P. on the one hand, and the P.M.I.P. on the other.

Dr. Tan Chee Khoo, Secretary-General of the Gerakan attributed "the swing away from the Alliance" to a "pro-Opposition wave sweeping the country..... The people have been disillusioned with Alliance misrule over the past 14 years."<sup>1</sup> It may be a pro-Opposition wave; but it could equally be an "Anti-Alliance" wave, and for want of better alternatives, the Opposition was indiscriminately accepted.

Lim Kit Siang, organising-secretary of the D.A.P., who was returned in the Bandar Malacca parliamentary constituency with a majority of 11,216 votes said that the overwhelming victory of the D.A.P. was a "victory for the concept and ideals of a Malaysian Malaya."<sup>3</sup> He added that the people wanted a change of the Alliance misrule, corruption, racialism and incompetence and he urged the Alliance Government to carry out

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<sup>1</sup> Figures obtained from Straits Times, 12th May 1969.

<sup>2</sup> Straits Times: 12/5/69.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



immediately a drastic appraisal and modification of its entire nation-building policy, including such issues as language, education, economic justice and political equality.<sup>1</sup> Lim Kit Siang appeared to think that such issues as language, education, economic justice and political equality (this refers to the Malay Special rights) have a bearing on the D.A.P.'s victory.

Assuming that Lim Kit Siang spoke for the people who elected him, and assuming that he was merely reflecting their views; then the following observations must be made of the above statements:

A "Malaysian Malaysia" was defined by the Malaysian Solidarity Convention (of Opposition parties) initiated by the People's Action Party, when Singapore was in Malaysia, to mean "the nation and the State is not identified with the Supremacy, well-being and the interests of any one particular community or race". It further pointed out that a Malaysian Malaysia is the antithesis of a Malay Malaysia, Chinese Malaysia or an Indian Malaysia.<sup>2</sup> The D.A.P. subscribed to this definition, so did the P.P.P. In putting forward this concept of "Malaysian Malaysia" the D.A.P. had voiced its objection to the Alliance language and education policy and its division of the citizens into 'bumiputras and non-bumiputras'. Thus if the voters, predominantly non-Malays (since D.A.P. won in constituencies where non-Malays are the majority), had voted D.A.P. for the concept and ideals of "Malaysian Malaysia" it did indicate the rejection of the Alliance policies mentioned above. The communal factor came into play for it was, indirectly the insecurity felt by the other communities, that turned the voters from the Alliance to the D.A.P. which promised racial equality under the banner of "Malaysian Malaysia."

The M.C.A., which claimed to represent the Chinese, suffered a convincing defeat. Of the 33 M.C.A. candidates, only 13 were returned, some of whom were elected from predominantly Malay Constituencies (e.g. Tan Siew Siew in the Malacca Tengah constituency). Mr. Yap Yin Fah, secretary of Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and a prominent member of Perak M.C.A., attributed the failure of the M.C.A. candidates to the fact that M.C.A. leaders had always turned a deaf ear to the general demand of the Chinese on their language and rights.<sup>3</sup> To what extent this was true, cannot be substantiated with 'scientific' evidence but neither could it be proved to be due to other factors.

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<sup>1</sup> Straits Times: 12/5/69

<sup>2</sup> Declaration by the Convenors of the Malaysian Solidarity Convention.

<sup>3</sup> Straits Times: 13/5/69



Tan Siew Sin, President of M.C.A. and formerly Minister of Finance admitted the disappointing results of the M.C.A. candidates and recognised "the success of parties which played on communalism during the campaign may be significant" but he hoped these tactics will not be continued.<sup>1</sup>

Abdul Ghafar bin Baba, then Minister without Portfolio claimed that "the result was a clear indication that communalism had gained ground in the country. The D.A.P., he said blamed the M.C.A. for letting down the Chinese while the P.M.I.P. charged U.M.N.O. with letting down the Malays and the Alliance had to bear the brunt of such tactics.<sup>2</sup>

Until a proper assessment can be made of the Election results, we have to be satisfied with an assessment made from the observations of prominent politicians, and from figures obtainable. However even in such a case, it cannot be denied that communalism had played its role in the elections. Political power (in terms of strength in Parliament) has begun its shift from the Alliance, 'a party of the centre' to communal Parties at the both extremes, the D.A.P. (also P.P.P.) and the P.M.I.P. One may argue that the Gerakan which in many ways, resembles the Alliance, had also won quite prominently and its policies are relatively very much less communal. It must not be forgotten that there was an electoral pact between the D.A.P. and the Gerakan. As such in a straight fight between Alliance and Gerakan, the Gerakan could have won because of an "anti-Alliance wave"; or because of the efficiency the Gerakan promised. Yet one cannot deny that in Penang and in most of the other constituencies that the Gerakan had won, the non-Malays are the majority; and between the Gerakan, a predominantly non-Malay party, and the Alliance, a presumed U.M.N.O. dominated party, the choice was for the Gerakan still. The element of communalism cannot be discarded.

Communalism in the elections may also be found in the poor performance of the Partai Rakyat (mainly a Malay party). Assuming that there was a sweeping "anti-Alliance wave", the Partai Rakyat could also be an alternative to the Alliance. Though in Pahang, it formed the main challenge to the Alliance, its performance was very disappointing. In Malacca, it suffered the same verdict. If there was a 'pro-opposition wave' as Dr. Tan Chee Khoon of the Gerakan had said, then the Partai

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<sup>1</sup> Straits Times : 12/5/69

<sup>2</sup> Straits Times: 13/5/69



Rakyat had not reaped its share. Or could it be that the Partai Rakyat is an ideological party, under the banner of Socialism? It had promised no "special rights" to any community and it had called for the economic advancement of the "have-nots" of all races; unlike the P.M.I.P. which sought to stop the exploitation of the Malays by the non-Malays and to safeguard the rights and sovereignty of the Malays while the D.A.P. and P.P.P. sought to prevent 'a racial hegemony' of the Malays over the non-Malays. The voters had not understood the Partai Rakyat ideological and relatively non-communal approach. The voters, generally preferred the communal parties.

The 1969 General Elections marked the communal nature of the Malaysian society and indicated the area of disagreement over the issue and approach of nation-building. In the desires of the various communities to safeguard their rights and interests, the people had turned to communal parties for security of their communal interests and "apparently within the Malayan environment, people prefer to denounce the pernicious qualities of communalism from a secure position within a communal party" <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Lucian W. Pye "The Politics of S.E. Asia", Part III of Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, (ed.) The Politics of Developing Areas (Princeton, 1960) p.11.



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